

Title: **Small versus Large-Scale Fishing Operations in the Azores Archipelago**

Author(s): Natacha Carvalho

**Abstract:** Most fishing fleets include a wide range of vessel types, sizes and gears. The different types of fishing operations may vary significantly in their ability to meet policy goals and hence, in order to plan for optimal resource use, knowledge of the overall performance of the different segments in a fishing fleet is essential. This study compares small and large-scale fishing operations in the Azores Archipelago, an outermost region of Portugal consisting of 9 islands situated in the NE Atlantic. The fishing sector, although traditionally characterised by a fleet composed of low capacity and unsophisticated small boats and vessels operating in near-shore waters, underwent a rapid development in the mid-eighties and now offers more sophisticated, offshore fishing vessels. Many fisheries, however, continue to be essentially artisanal, playing a significant role in the regional economy by providing an important source of employment, income and trading opportunities. This study attempts to quantify some of the differences between the small and large-scale fishing sectors in the Azores and examines how the two compare in a number of policy-relevant variables, including employment, total landings, number of individual fishing units, fuel consumption and the amount of catch used for direct human consumption. The analysis is based on socioeconomic surveys of the fishing communities in the Region, as well as, several databases on landings and fleet characteristics. The fishing fleet was divided into small and large-scale according to a set of criteria based on vessel size, gear type, target species and catch value.